

that time no longer exists; and the history of the recent failure of the Supplying System is really nothing more nor less than a tracing of the changes which have brought about this alteration in its position.

To make clear what I am about to detail let me state right here that the natural exigencies of the Supplying System, carried out to their logical conclusion, require that this island should be the exclusive property of one Supplying firm, which should employ the able-bodied productive population in carrying on the fisheries of the island, under such close or exclusive rules, or legislation, as would preclude all that we know under the names of commercial competition and the modern rights of civil citizenship. In short, to make the Supplying System a success, implies Newfoundland as a fishery plantation, under surrogates and fishing admirals, as in the sixteenth century.

The first great commercial change within my experience that struck a death blow at the Supplying System was the introduction here of steamers as ordinary freighters of provisions between this country and the American continent. Prior to that, every merchant who imported provisions loaded a sailing vessel of his own, and had a kind of monopoly in its cargo. When steamers were put on at low rates of freight, after it became general to supercede sailing vessels by steam carriers built mainly for freighting purposes, every small dealer could import his own twenty or fifty barrels of flour, instead of buying them of the local merchant. The steam freighters, in short, became distributors, and broke up the monopoly of the larger capitalists all over the island.

The next step of commercial progress, and one that naturally followed the other, was the introduction here of the practice of selling flour and other provisions on the c. f. i. principle. This gave a further blow to the old Supplying System, by bringing the miller of Ontario into direct commercial relations with the smallest retail dealer in St. John's.

Next we find this advance followed up by another step of progress that it naturally suggested. That was the arrival here of special agents, who went all over the island, and into the remotest outharbor, placing the small independent external trader on the same plane of advantage as the largest Mercantile capitalist in the metropolis. These changes substantially meant the introduction and general diffusion of THE CASH SYSTEM in Newfoundland.

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